DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 475 376 RC 024 025

AUTHOR Reed, Lorrie C.

TITLE Striving for Distinctiveness: A Small Schools Case Study.

PUB DATE 2003-01-07

NOTE 24p.; Paper presented at the Annual Hawaii International Conference on Education (1st, Honolulu, HI, January 2003).

PUB TYPE Reports - Research (143) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE EDRS Price MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.

DESCRIPTORS Academic Achievement; Achievement Gains; Black Education; *Educational Practices; Elementary Education; *Elementary Schools; House Plan; Institutional Autonomy; *Institutional Characteristics; *School Effectiveness; *Small Schools

IDENTIFIERS African Americans; Illinois (Chicago)

ABSTRACT

Between 1997 and 2001, an elementary school on the south side of Chicago was reorganized to improve student achievement. By 2000, students at one small school (referred to as CASE) showed achievement gains, while students at other small schools within the host site did not. Teachers at CASE could not account for its success. During 2000-2001 a research project investigated whether CASE exhibited the distinctive characteristics associated with success in the small-schools literature. Project participants included four teachers of grades 4 and 5. The teachers and almost all their students were African Americans. Approximately 88 percent of the student body was low-income. Findings indicate that CASE exhibited varying degrees of eight success factors identified in the literature: (1) flexibility in student assessment; (2) autonomy in content, geared to student needs; (3) autonomy in context, allowing participative decision making by teachers; (4) choice or voluntary involvement by teachers and parents; (5) appropriate organizational structure and size; (6) parent and community involvement and commitment; (7) vision- or mission-driven work; and (8) other ecological factors specific to this school, such as teacher collaboration. (Contains 15 references.) (Author/SV)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original document.

RC RCTR 0017

Running head: DISTINCTIVENESS

ED 475 376

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Lorrie C. Reed
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
1

Striving for Distinctiveness: A Small Schools Case Study

Lorrie C. Reed

Associate Professor

Northern Illinois University

A Paper Presented at the

First Annual Hawaii International Conference on Education

Honolulu, HI

January 7, 2003

RC024025

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Abstract

By the end of the 2000 academic year, a small school on the south side of Chicago had reached what is referred to as "breakthrough status" in Annenberg Challenge Grant circles. When asked what contributed to the school's success, teachers did not have clear-cut answers. This case study was launched during the 2000-2001 school year to identify why students in the case school experienced achievement gains when students at other small schools within the host site did not perform as well. This researcher was part of a team of investigators from sociology, educational administration, and curriculum studies. This report represents only a segment of the larger research project and examines the characteristics associated in the literature with conditions for success in small schools. Specifically, this paper addresses the question, "To what extent did the case school achieve distinctiveness as defined by characteristics identified in recent literature about successful small schools?" Findings indicate that the case school exhibited varying degrees of eight success factors: 1) assessment and standards, 2) autonomy in content, 3) autonomy in context, 4) choice / voluntary involvement of participants, 5) appropriate organizational structure and size, 6) parent-community involvement and commitment, 7) vision / mission driven work, and 8) other ecological factors specific to the site. Implications for further research include examining whether these factors exist in all successful small schools and determining the extent to which each factor contributes to a total effect.

INTRODUCTION

Between 1997 and 2001, an elementary school on the south side of Chicago (referred to as CASE in the remainder of this paper) was reorganized as a way to improve student achievement. By the end of academic year 1999-2000 CASE had reached what the Annenberg Foundation refers to as "breakthrough status." When asked what accounted for their success teachers at the school had no clear-cut answers. This research project was launched during 2000-2001 to help stakeholders identify why CASE students had experienced achievement gains when students at other small schools within the host site did not perform as well. The research team consisted of investigators from sociology, education administration, and curriculum studies. This paper is a small segment of a larger research study.

Purpose of the Paper

The purpose of this paper is to report whether the CASE Small School exhibited distinctive characteristics that have been associated with success in the literature about small schools. To the extent that those characteristics are present, the small school is able to provide a uniquely suited set of experiences for many at-risk children who may otherwise get lost in an impersonal, bureaucratic school system.

Literature Review

When a small schools concept has been implemented appropriately and completely the reformed institution will exhibit a high degree of distinctiveness, a quality born of organizational elements combined creatively in novel ways. Such elements include organizational structure, role assignments, idiosyncratic customs, celebrations, curriculum organization, curriculum content, and instructional strategies, among other

things (Raywid, 1996). The distinctive school is an institution that has been granted enough autonomy and flexibility to solve its own problems in idiosyncratic ways (Meier, 1995). In many successful small schools, teachers, parents, and students who affiliate with the school do so because they are drawn to the mission and vision of the school, and they believe that, as a collective group, they can attain the goals for children that the school has set out to achieve. When a school is distinctive, it has become the product of the teachers who operate it.

Recommended School Size

In response to the question, "How small should schools be in order to attain and sustain success?" no widespread agreement exists. A review of the literature suggests that for disadvantaged students in urban schools, the ideal school size ranges from 75 to 400 students. Larger units lead to organizing people into subunits and specialty areas as mechanisms for monitoring and control of work and productivity. Table 1 shows the range of size prescriptions contained in the literature about small schools.

Table 1

Optimal Size for Small Schools

Source	Recommended Size
Wasley & Lear (2001)	200 to 400 students
Clinchy (1998)	75 to 350 students
Meier (1996)	300 to 400 students
Klonsky & Ford (1994)	200 TO 400 students
Nathan & Myatt (1998)	250 to 300 students

Wasley et al. (2000)	100 to 350 students

Benefits of Small Schools

From an academic standpoint, students in small schools show gains in grade point average and achievement on standardized tests. For example, each semester, students in a small Chicago high school attended up to 5 more days of school, and dropped out at one-third to one-half the rate of the comparison group. These students showed gains in grade-point averages of up to .22 points, and they improved reading scores by equivalent of one-half year. Through all of this, their math scores held steady (Wasley & Lear, 2001). In New York, researchers from SUNY-Stony Brook, indicated that the provision of schools of choice in District 4 led to improved student achievement in all the district's schools, not just the choice schools (Clinchy, 1998). Furthermore, at a well-known small school in Harlem, more than 80 percent of the students finished high school; and more 65 percent went on to college (Bensman, 1994).

Small schools also boast of a number of non-academic benefits. Compared to their peers in traditional schools, teachers in small schools have a stronger sense of efficacy, more job satisfaction, greater levels of connection with parents, more opportunities to collaborate, more opportunities to use a variety of instructional approaches, and more opportunities to engage students in peer critique and analysis (Wasley et al., 2000). Parents and guardians of children in small schools, along with other community members, reported having increased confidence in schools (Wasley et al., 2000). And, in this day and age, one of the most important benefits provided by small schools is that they tend to make students feel safe (Wasley et al., 2000).

That small schools provide greater opportunities for social justice among children is another benefit, according to Ayers (2000).

> In small schools every student must be known well by some caring adult, and every student must have a realistic possibility of belonging to a community of learners. There is in students a sense of visibility, of significance, of the hope to negotiate here the tricky terrain of identity. The message to children and youth is clear: You are a valuable and valued person here; without you this entire enterprise would flounder and fail (p. 5).

Finally, because of organizational smallness, teachers, students, and others affiliated with the school are more likely to know and respect each another (Raywid, 1996). Such bonding between student and school puts the school in a position to affect the personal habits of young people, habits such as smoking, alcohol use, and drug use. Some researchers have also indicated that attendance in small schools may affect students' aspirations, including their college attendance and other post-high school life plans (Bensman, 1994, 2000; Raywid, 1996).

Characteristics of Success

Wasley and Lear (2001) have identified eight characteristics they associate with success in small schools. These include small size; ongoing and strong relationships between students and adults; strong and sustained relationships with parents; flat organizational structure with broadly distributed leadership and lean administrative configuration; focused program that concentrates on a few goals and insists that all students meet them; ongoing, site-specific professional development that focused on how to work more effectively with students; a culture revolving around hard work, high

aspirations, respect for others, and expectations that all students succeed; and a program that engages the entire community in educating young people.

Wasley et al. (2000), in their Bank Street College study of small schools in Chicago, concluded that conditions that made gains possible centered on students and teachers. Namely, success in small schools depended on teachers who knew students well; teachers who had high expectations for the students, which often led to high expectations in the students themselves; teachers who fostered critical judgment in their students; teachers who used a broad range of strategies to engage their students; students who reported feeling safe in their schools; and teachers, students, and parents who shared a strong sense of accountability.

Similar characteristics are cited as factors for success in other literature. One of those factors relates to the size of the institution and the way it is governed. Meier (1996) suggests that success is associated with governance by a faculty small enough to know one another's ideas and work. Another factor is toughness that develops within a culture of mutual respect and knowledge of the needs of every individual in the organization. Organizational simplicity is a requisite for success. So is safety, according to Meier: "Small schools offer what metal detectors and guards cannot -- the safety and security of being where you are known well by people who care for you" (Meier, 1996, p. 13). Also important is parent involvement, which permits parents and guardians for forge strong alliances with teachers and other educators in school. Accountability matters: In small schools, parents and community members, along with other stakeholders, can simply walk around the building and see for themselves how well the school is doing. And finally, belongingness counts for success in small schools; "every kid is known, every

kid belongs to a community that includes adults. Relationships are cross-disciplinary, cross-generational, and cross-everything else" (Meier, 1996, p. 14).

Clinchy (1998) believes that success in small schools is associated with students, parents, and staff members having greater opportunities to get to know one another. This, when combined with the school's having philosophical, curricular, organizational, and fiscal autonomy to develop innovative programs as they believe they should be developed, can expand the potential of the institution to serve the student body. Another characteristic associated with success is choice: Parents can voluntarily choose the school because they want a particular type of education for their children.

Klonsky and Ford (1994) detail what counts in Chicago. They believe that restructuring should begin with a group of teachers who are like-minded or with parents and administrators who have a clear vision to unite them. Teachers and students should have the choice to join. Small schools should have a student body reflecting the full range of abilities within the larger school. Small schools also should have substantial autonomy. Raywid (1997/98) concurs and says that substantial agreement is emerging regarding the centrality of small size, an organizational structure departing significantly from the conventional., and a setting that operates more like a community than a bureaucracy. Figure 1 summarizes these points of concurrence.

Figure 1

Categories Contributing to Successful Small Schools

Assessment and Standards	Focused Curriculum (5 articles) Academic Accountability (3 articles)

Autonomy – Content Specific	Autonomy for curriculum, assessment, and staff development (4 articles)
Autonomy - Context Specific	Autonomy for budget and staffing (4 articles)
Choice / Voluntary Involvement	Voluntary Participation (3 articles)
Organizational Structure and Size	Small Size (6 articles) Simple Organizational Structure (4 articles)
Parent - Community Commitment	Strong Relationships (3 articles) Parent Involvement (3 articles) Committed Community (5 articles)
Vision/Mission Driven	Supportive Culture (5 articles)
Other Ecological Factors	Mutual Respect (4 articles) Diverse, Representative Students

Definition of Terms

Table 2 shows the working definitions that emerged as this researcher performed detailed coding and interpretation of the final data set, which consisted of transcribed notes from interviews and observations, copies of handbooks, school improvement plans, and state report cards; and other artifacts that were supplied from individual teachers and counselors.

Table 2

Working Definitions for Successful Small Schools

Factor	Definition
Assessment and Standards	These are methods by which teachers establish curricular guidelines and examine student progress toward meeting pre-defined expectations. Standards and goals may be specified at the national, state, local or school level. Assessment may be accomplished through traditional or nontraditional means. In small schools, while assessment is data driven, it goes far beyond standardized testing.
Autonomy – Content Specific	This encompasses a unique philosophy for curriculum and assessment. Teachers have flexibility to deliver content as deemed appropriate. Control over the nature and number of professional growth and staff development experiences lies in the hands of teachers.
Autonomy – Context Specific	This entails providing to teachers the latitude and authority to establish site-specific procedures for managing the budget and acquiring supplies. This also relates to perceptions among stakeholders about the impact of policy initiatives affecting the small school.
Choice / Voluntary Involvement	Flexibility to exercise one's beliefs regarding education by electing consciously and deliberately to participate in the organization's activities constitutes this category. This also includes procedures for

	staffing the program.
Organizational Structure and Size	Hierarchical relationships among people in the organization to govern the means by which decisions are made, communication occurs, schedules are developed, and leadership is distributed are included in this category. In the small school, these relationships are simple and often hierarchically flat. Organizational size is small, usually no more than 400 people.
Parent – Community Commitment	This relates to a sense of belief in the school's ability to affect positive change among students. Students, teachers, parents, and other key stakeholders, as members of a cohesive community, exhibit unity of purpose, high expectations, and strong aspirations for success.
Vision/Mission Driven	Mutually defined, commonly shared purposes for the existence of the school, with a future oriented sense of what the organization is capable of becoming comprises this category. The mission and vision of the school serve as the umbrella under which all other activities take place. Together, the mission and vision of the school provide coherence for the work accomplished at the site.
Other Ecological Factors	This category includes characteristics that synergistically foster success in a particular setting but which may not operate in the same way in a different context.

Major Questions

The major question on which this paper is based is "Did the case school achieve distinctiveness as defined by characteristics identified in recent literature about successful small schools?" Through the voices of the teachers, counselors, and the principal of the school, the answer to this question will emerge.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

Participants in this study were all classroom teachers (n=4) associated with CASE, a downsized, restructured school housed within a public school host on the south side of Chicago. Each CASE teacher had a class size of 24 for a total of 96 students, (48 4th graders and 48 5th graders) who were enrolled during academic year 1999-2000. As of September 30, 1999, 99.9% of the student body was African-American; 0.9% was Caucasian-American, and 0.1% was Hispanic in origin. Approximately 88% of the student body came from "low-income" families, that is, those who received public aid, or who may have lived in institutions for neglected or delinquent children, or who may have been supported in foster homes with public funds, or who may have been eligible to receive free or reduced-price lunch. For the overall school, the attendance rate was 94.2%; the mobility rate, 21.9%, and the chronic truancy rate, 4.0%.

All four of the classroom teachers who participated in the study were African-Americans. This researcher also interviewed the principal, the two counselors, and parents who served as classroom volunteers, all of whom were African-Americans.

Data Gathering Mechanisms

The small schools case study was conducted between March 2001 and June 2001. After obtaining informed consent from participants, this researcher began to access local knowledge through semi-structured interviews, observations, and questionnaires. The teacher protocol was developed by the researcher on the basis of theory about what constitutes change in school reform situations as well as the factors that appear to support collaboration in small schools. A similar protocol was used with counselors and with the principal; many of their responses required more follow-up questioning, clarification, and expansion, since their perspectives were distinct from those of the teachers. Interaction with participants occurred over several days during the study period; follow-up meetings were conducted as needed to enhance the researcher's ability to see emerging issues and their meanings from many vantage points.

This researcher analyzed a variety of other policy artifacts including student handbooks, state report cards for 1997 to 2001, and school improvement plans for the same range of years. School improvement plans and state report cards are accountability reports required by the Illinois State Board of Education to document each school's progress toward affecting growth in student achievement. These documents supplement other data by providing demographic information to clarify the context in which schooling was delivered at each site.

Data Analysis

As a result of studying recent literature regarding small schools, this researcher developed working categories to be used initially in coding interview and observation transcription data from the CASE Small School. After the first pass through the data, the

category definitions were fine-tuned using a procedure based on the constant comparative method as described by Haller and Kleine (2000).

RESULTS

Specifically, this paper addressed the question, "Did the case school achieve distinctiveness as defined by characteristics identified in recent literature about successful small schools?" Findings indicate that all characteristics associated with success in the literature about small schools were present at CASE; these characteristics include 1) assessment and standards, 2) autonomy in content, 3) autonomy in context, 4) choice / voluntary involvement of participants, 5) appropriate organizational structure and size, 6) parent-community commitment, 7) vision / mission driven work, and 8) other ecological factors specific to the site. Each characteristic is summarized in the discussion that follows:

Assessment and Standards

Standards and the methods by which they are assessed are determined in large part by state mandates, board of education policy, along with host school practices and procedures. The vision of the host school was stated as helping students "surpass national norms on all standardized tests in all subject areas" (Handbook, p. x). This "vision" was in concert with that of the Board of Education and focused on improving the institution's annual, average showing on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills and the Illinois Standard Assessment Test. The host school's test-prep program and associated accountability documentation were designed to support a vision with standardized testing as its main focal point. Because of such outside pressure, CASE teachers were compelled

to teach to the test while trying to nurture their own vision and maintain the integrity of their own program.

CASE, on the other hand, embraced a vision that stood in contrast with that of the host school. Even though the Board concentrated on standardized tests, CASE sought to serve students better by instilling in them a love of learning and heightened self-esteem as well as improved test scores. These were among the tenets expressed in the CASE vision/mission statement printed in the student handbook. In an effort to alleviate the tension between the competing visions, the host school principal gave CASE teachers broad flexibility to develop an instructional program aligned with standards yet monitored by assessments that gauged progress in advancing toward the small school's stated vision. While CASE teachers provided the documentation required by the host, they also managed to build in mechanisms to assess whether all students were learning, whether learning experiences tapped into multiple modes of intelligence, and whether students were developing a heightened self-esteem and an interest in life-long learning. CASE teachers augmented the required test-preparation activities with performance-based assessments.

Autonomy – Content Specific

CASE was founded on the premise that every student brings unique needs to the classroom, and unless those needs are addressed, optimum learning does not take place. Therefore, CASE teachers kept the needs of the students in mind as they developed the curriculum, selected the assessments, and planned learning experiences for students. They enjoyed broad flexibility in delivering what they deemed to be appropriate classroom instruction. On the other hand, control over the nature and number of

professional growth and staff development experiences was largely out of control of the teachers. One major weakness identified by teachers is that the host school did not provide enough time for formal planning and collaboration involving only teachers in the small schools team. Consequently, CASE teachers had to improvise by engaging in impromptu growth experiences and collaborative discussions whenever opportunities presented themselves.

Autonomy – Context Specific

One counselor noted that at the host site, teachers were routinely given a voice in making decisions about the budget. When teachers needed more or different materials and books for a curricular unit, funds were provided, and materials were ordered in a timely way. However, teachers reported that they often had to spend monies out of pocket for supplementary materials. In fact, they frequently shopped together at the teacher store.

Teachers identified a number of policy initiatives they felt had positive and negative effects on the operation of the small school. Among the positives participants cited flexibility in instructional delivery, nurturing of students, the small schools' discipline policy, the student handbook, the "Perfect Pockets" behavioral management system, grade-level team structure, and parent involvement. The negatives included the school's emphasis on testing, the retention policy, and the homework policy. In general, policies that were deemed positive were those over which teachers had a great deal of control. Policies that emanated from the top down were viewed as having a negative impact on the small school's operation.

Choice / Voluntary Involvement

Evidence gathered from interviews shows that the four teachers and two counselors, as well as the parent volunteers, were associated with the small school by choice. That was not the case, however, for most students and their parents. All students who attended 4th and 5th grade at the host school had no choice but to attend CASE. Thus, it appears that students and their parents did not have complete freedom to elect or decline the small schools experience. Most parents associated with the small school, over time however, showed support for the school, according to interview accounts.

Staffing was another issue associated with this category. Based on information obtained from teachers, counselors, and the principal, initial staffing of the program was accomplished through an informal screening process. Although it has not been an issue so far, the principal indicated that if a vacancy existed in the small school she would search for a replacement that shared the same values, beliefs, strengths, and dispositions as the current CASE teachers. She acknowledged that any replacement would have to blend in with the existing team. The principal also said she would involve CASE teachers in the screening and selection processes for any replacements.

Organizational Structure and Size

As noted earlier in this paper, organizational structure and size relate to how well the organization facilitates communication among teachers and those on whom they depend for support, scheduling of activities associated with the small school, and decentralizing leadership and decision making. At CASE, issues revolving around structure and space initially presented challenges for the small school. Those who were familiar with the school's history reported that it started out as a completely

departmentalized organization, with students having to travel between floors a few times a day to see all their teachers. Parents were not pleased; students were disorganized. After a challenging start, CASE staff and the administration re-examined the structure and made a few changes, which were implemented during academic year 2000-2001. Instead of a completely departmentalized organization, CASE adopted a grade-level team structure in which all students at each grade level saw only two classroom teachers for their regular instructional program. Within these grade-level teams, teachers instituted an internal system of departmentalization with one of the teachers specializing in mathematics and science and the other one in language arts, reading, and social studies. The change worked well. Students were more organized; parents were more supportive.

Communication represents another component of this category. In CASE, communication is frequent and is accomplished by both formal and informal means. Teachers communicated with each other in impromptu meetings in the hallway and outside the school. They often visited each other's classrooms to talked face to face about concerns. Each grade-level team shared a telephone, which was used to communicate with home, with the office, and with each other. CASE teachers communicated with parents by telephone, correspondence, conferences, handbooks, meetings, and in other formal and informal ways. Few opportunities were made available for CASE teachers to communicate with their peers at formal meetings in the host school.

Parent – Community Commitment

Those people affiliated with CASE believed strongly in the program's potential and its power to change the lives of students in a positive way. The students, teachers, parents, and other key stakeholders formed a cohesive community, for the most part,

although within every organization there were a few dissenters. The people of CASE exhibited unity of purpose, high expectations, and strong aspirations for success for all students. At CASE students were the first priority.

Vision/Mission Driven

This category manifests in a school program that directs all efforts to achieving the vision and mission of the organization. From big events, like the frog dissection project, to the little details such as the pictures on the wall, CASE sought to provide a distinctive, gratifying, and productive experience for children. Sometimes tough love was used to get the message across, but the children responded in a positive way because everything around them reinforced the fact that CASE adults care about kids. While the CASE vision focused on meeting the needs of the children, it was somewhat inconsistent with the host school's mission and vision, which emphasized performance on standardized tests. In most cases where conflict occurred or negative impressions were left, they centered on this inconsistency of purpose. In the handbook, the difference in emphasis appeared to be such a little thing. In practice, however, that small difference made a big impact.

Other Ecological Factors

Every school has ecology, a balance of environmental factors that affect the daily operation of the institution. The school's ecology consists of characteristics that synergistically foster success in a particular setting, yet these same characteristics may have no impact in a different setting. A number of ecological factors strengthened the CASE program, factors such as co-teaching and the spirit of collaboration that was everywhere present in CASE, the use of a variety of teaching strategies that fostered

optimum performance from students of all types of learning style, and a strong sense of professional dedication that every CASE teacher exuded.

Ecological factors that tended to weaken the school's program included the perception by CASE teachers of professional jealousy from their colleagues in the host school, the host school's procedures for scheduling along with its emphasis on testing, and the general lack of continuity between CASE and non-CASE programs as students transitioned in and out of the grade levels serviced by the small school. Many participants reported that transitions were not smooth; consequently, some students suffered.

A number of practices that began in CASE have filtered into the larger school setting. Such practices included departmentalization, the "Perfect Pockets" behavioral management system, and a more nurturing attitude toward students. One practice of the larger school that had a positive impact on CASE was the presence of special activities in which CASE students may become involved.

DISCUSSION / CONCLUSIONS

Based on the evidence, it appears that CASE is on the road to attaining distinctiveness as a small school. The school (from Abstract) The teachers are proud of their efforts, and the principal boasts of the school's successes. The principal ended out interview with a smile on her face. "I'm very proud of the CASE program as I am of the others programs. We have some other small school programs and they all work hard. Again, CASE was kind of picked out because they were one of the first and they did a lot of things. I'm very proud of the staff and they're motivated. They go on and meet. They love the children

established purpose of the 8 success factors identified in the small schools literature.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

love the children and they try to do everything to help the children learn. They involve the parents. They're just doing a real good job right now."

Limitations and Strengths of This Study

As with the case study methodology in general, the present study was limited by insufficient time on site, small number and limited scope of sample, and limited grounds for generalizing the findings of the study. The case study method provides a number of benefits, including examining the voices of people who lie in the "tails" of the normal distribution, voices that would otherwise remain silent and buried beneath central tendency. Case studies also present the power to provide rich, detailed descriptions of the environment in which the research took place. Implications for further research include examining whether the characteristics identified in the present study can be linked to success in all small schools and determining the extent to which each factor contributes to a total effect. Such information can be instructive for schools just now considering downsizing as a reform alternative.

REFERENCES

Ayers, W. (2000). Simple justice: Thinking about teaching and learning, equity, and the fight for small schools. In W. Ayers, M. Klonsky, & G. Lyons (Eds.), A simple justice: The challenge of small schools (pp. 1 – 8). New York: Teachers College Press.

Ayers, W., Klonsky, M., & Lyon, G. (Eds.). (2000). A simple justice: The challenge of small schools. New York: Teachers College Press.

Bensman, D. (1994). Direct assessment of a progressive public elementary school: Graduates of Central Park East. New York: Andrew W. Mellon Foundation; EXXON Corp. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED374182)

Bensman, D. (2000). Central Park East and its graduates: Learning by heart. New York: Teachers College Press.

Clinchy, E. (1998). The educationally challenged American school district. Phi Delta Kappan,80(4), 272-77.

Clinchy, E. (Ed.). (2000). Creating new schools: How small schools are changing American education. NY: Teachers College Press.

Haller, E. J., & Kleine, P. F. (2001). Using educational research: A school administrator's guide. New York: Longman.

Klonsky, M., & Ford, S. (1994). One urban solution: Small schools. Educational Leadership, 51 (8), 64-67.

Meier, D. (1995). The power of their ideas: Lessons for America from a small school in Harlem. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

Meier, D. (1996). The big benefits of smallness. Educational Leadership, 54(1), 12-15.

Nathan, L. & Myatt, L. (1998). A journey toward autonomy. Phi Delta Kappan, 80(4), 278-286.

Raywid, M. A. (1996). Taking stock: The movement to create mini-schools, schools-within-schools, and separate small schools. Urban Diversity Series No. 108. (ERIC Document Reproduction No. ED396045)

Raywid, M. E. (1997/1998, December-January). Small schools: A reform that works. Educational Leadership, 55(4), 34-39.

Wasley, P. A., Fine, M., King, S. P., Powell, L. C., Holland, N. E., Gladden, R. M., & Mosak, E. (2000). Small schools: Great strides, a study of new small schools in Chicago. New York: Bank Street College of Education.

Wasley, P. A., & Lear, R.J. (2001). Small schools, real gains. Educational Leadership, 58(6), 22-27.

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)
National Library of Education (NLE)
Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)

REPRODUCTION RELEASE

(Specific Document)

I. DOCUMENT IDENTIFICATION:

Title:	Striving for Distinctiveness: A Small Schools Case Study
Author(s):	Lorrie C. Reed, Associate Professor
Corporate Source:	Northern Illinois University, De Kalb, IL
Publication Date:	

II. REPRODUCTION RELEASE:

In order to disseminate as widely as possible timely and significant materials of interest to the educational community, documents announced in the monthly abstract journal of the ERIC system, *Resources in Education* (RIE), are usually made available to users in microfiche, reproduced paper copy, and electronic media, and sold through the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). Credit is given to the source of each document, and, if reproduction release is granted, one of the following notices is affixed to the document.

If permission is granted to reproduce and disseminate the identified document, please CHECK ONE of the following three options and sign at the bottom of the page.

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 1 documents

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Sample

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

1

Level 1

X

Check here for Level 1 release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche or other ERIC archival media (e.g., electronic) and paper copy.

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 2A documents

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE, AND IN ELECTRONIC MEDIA FOR ERIC COLLECTION SUBSCRIBERS ONLY, HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Sample

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

2A

Level 2A

❑

Check here for Level 2A release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche and in electronic media for ERIC archival collection subscribers only

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 2B documents

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Sample

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

2B

Level 2B

❑

Check here for Level 2B release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche only

Documents will be processed as indicated provided reproduction quality permits.
If permission to reproduce is granted, but no box is checked, documents will be processed at Level 1.

I hereby grant to the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) nonexclusive permission to reproduce and disseminate this document as indicated above. Reproduction from the ERIC microfiche or electronic media by persons other than ERIC employees and its system contractors requires permission from the copyright holder. Exception is made for non-profit reproduction by libraries and other service agencies to satisfy information needs of educators in response to discrete inquiries.

Signature: Lorrie Reed

Organization/Address:

Department of Leadership in Educational and Sport Organizations, Gabel 161
Northern Illinois University, De Kalb, IL 60115

Lorrie C. Reed, Associate Professor
Northern Illinois University
Home: (815) 753-3404
Fax: (815) 753-1513
E-mail: lcreed@niu.edu
Date 3/13/03

III. DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY INFORMATION (FROM NON-ERIC SOURCE):

If permission to reproduce is not granted to ERIC, or, if you wish ERIC to cite the availability of the document from another source, please provide the following information regarding the availability of the document. (ERIC will not announce a document unless it is publicly available, and a dependable source can be specified. Contributors should also be aware that ERIC selection criteria are significantly more stringent for documents that cannot be made available through EDRS.)

Publisher/Distributor:
Address:
Price:

IV. REFERRAL OF ERIC TO COPYRIGHT/REPRODUCTION RIGHTS HOLDER:

If the right to grant this reproduction release is held by someone other than the addressee, please provide the appropriate name and address:

Name:
Address:

V. WHERE TO SEND THIS FORM:

Send this form to the following ERIC Clearinghouse:

However, if solicited by the ERIC Facility, or if making an unsolicited contribution to ERIC, return this form (and the document being contributed) to:

ERIC Processing and Reference Facility
4483-A Forbes Boulevard
Lanham, Maryland 20706

Telephone: 301-552-4200
Toll Free: 800-799-3742
FAX: 301-552-4700
e-mail: ericfac@inet.ed.gov
WWW: http://ericfacility.org